

# Water Lilies

by Nettie Farris

Folding and folding . . . I am turning the pages of old poems into paper boats. Most often the pages turn into strange birds instead, asymmetrical and unable to fly. They bear their deformities gracefully. There is no waving of hands, no visual signs of agitation. The construction of a boat requires skill, so I am working on precision in my creases, despite my lack of fine motor control. I cannot even shape the letters of my own name, or yours. See how the letters bob forward and back, forward and back, bumping in to one other, gently. Where does my name end and yours begin? Where begins the world? And the water—See how placid the surface looks, how silent. On its muddy bottom lie the bodies of dead birds.